United Nations S/2004/310

Security Council

Distr.: General
19 April 2004

Original: English

Letter dated 8 April 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw your attention to the statement on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the genocide in Rwanda, issued on 8 April 2004 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union (see annex).

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Richard **Ryan**
Permanent Representative of Ireland
to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 8 April 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English, French and Spanish]

Statement on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the genocide in Rwanda, issued on 8 April 2004 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union

Never again

The commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the genocide in Rwanda is an occasion for reflection and sadness on the part of all in the international community. The European Union would like to pay tribute to those who died and render homage to the strength and courage of the survivors. The European Union also salutes the effort and success of the Rwandan people in re-building their country following the horrific events of 1994. The progress which has been achieved in Rwanda over the past decade and the efforts under way to achieve national reconciliation demonstrate the strength of purpose of the Rwandan people to ensure that there is never again a recurrence of such atrocities to the Rwandan people.

It is clear that tragic mistakes were made by the international community before and during the genocide. The international community's response to the genocide came too late and proved insufficient. The challenge to never again fail to prevent such horrors lies at the heart of the European Union's policy. The European Union is ambitious in its objective to avoid the recurrence of genocide anywhere in the world, yet humble in knowing that, whatever it does, it may not be enough.

The European Union is heartened by the efforts of the United Nations to forewarn the world against future genocide and supports the proposals of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, first made in connection with the Stockholm International Forum: Preventing Genocide, for a stronger United Nations role in the effective prevention of genocide. In particular, the European Union welcomes the decision by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to appoint a Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide. The European Union will support the Special Adviser, and will make full use of the advice and information generated. The European Union itself is also increasing its work to prevent genocide, through its programme on the prevention of armed conflict, its support to the International Criminal Court, its development cooperation, its commitment to human rights, as well as by other means. The European Union has also been working hard to take on board the lessons deriving from the experience of the 1994 genocide, through improving its capacities to react quickly to crisis situations. This is why the European Union launched Operation Artemis, in cooperation with the United Nations, in Ituri, Democratic Republic of the Congo, last summer. This can be considered the first case where the European Union effectively helped to prevent acts of genocide. The European Union will continue its efforts to improve its capacities in the area of early warning and conflict prevention.

The European Union renews its commitment to the people of Rwanda and will continue to support Rwanda as it continues on the path of national recovery. The lessons of the genocide in Rwanda must never be forgotten. This fact will continue to inspire and motivate the European Union as it works, both through its own

instruments and with its international partners, for improved collective action in the areas of conflict prevention, early warning and defence of human rights. Continuing human rights abuses and humanitarian crises across the world need our concerted attention.

The acceding countries Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, the candidate countries Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey, the countries of the stabilization and association process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.